(b) Some posts reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes could not be filled by candidates belonging to these categories because of non-availability of suitable candidates, etc.

(c) **Yes,** Sir.

Vacant posts of SCs/STs

t991. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the posts reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes which are lying vacant in various Departments of Central Government for more than one year, Ministry-wise;

(b) whether Government have issued any directions for filling up of the said vacant posts; and

(c) if so, by when the above posts are proposed to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) Information is not Centrally maintained.

(b) The Government issued instructions *vide* Department of Personnel and Training's O.M. No. 36012/5/97-Estt. (Res.) Vol.ll dated 20th July, 2000 requesting all Ministries/Departments to carry out a review for early assessment of the backlog vacancies in respect of SCs and STs both by way of direct recruitment and promotion and make concerted efforts to fill up backlog vacancies.

(c) All Ministries/Department are required to fill up the backlog reserved vacancies at the earliest.

Purchase of computers by Kendriya Bhandar

992. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Kendriya Bhandar is still purchasing computers, HP cartridges and other branded items at higher prices from retailers instead of manufacturers and authorized distributors in contravention of the revised purchase policy-2003; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, whether the matter has been investigated and what action has been taken against the persons responsible for violating the purchase policy and to find the vested interest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) and (b) The Purchase Policy of Kendriya Bhandar provides that products will be procured from manufacturers and where the manufacturers express their inability for direct marketing, that purchases be made from their authorized distributors/agencies. As per information received from Kendriya Bhandar, M/s Hewlett Packard do not undertake direct selling of cartridges. They have appointed their national distributors and apart from that, M/s HP India also appoints their RSR (Registered Supplies Reseller). As per M/s Hewlett Packard business model, even their national distributors are not permitted to undertake the direct selling to customer and they only sell/supply to their RSRs. It is the RSRs, who make the payments to the national distributors, maintain inventory and do the marketing. Kendriya Bhandar have therefore entered into a tripartite agreement with M/s Hewlett Packard and their RSRs duly appointed/authorized by them.

Enactment of Whistleblower's Protection Act

993. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court has directed the Union Government to enact Whistleblower's Protection Act by making the CVC as the guardian authority;

(b) if so, the details of the direction given by the Supreme Court to Government;

(c) the action that has been contemplated by Government in this respect;

(d) whether Government have prepared any draft legislation on this;

(e) if so, the proposed authority is going to cover the Prime Minister; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?